

BEACON

IN THIS ISSUE

THOUSANDS CONVERGE ON OUTER BANKS TO CELEBRATE FLIGHT CENTENNIAL

Hundreds of Hanscom pilots among them

THE FREEDOM OF FLIGHT

17 year old echoes feelings of pilots everywhere after her first flight

NEW ENGLAND AVIATION COMMUNITY RESPONDS FAVORABLY TO NEW ASSOCIATION

GA pilots and AOPA band together in wake-up call

OLD HANSCOM TOWER DEMOLISHED

Mixed emotions prevail during demolition



AVIONICS AND "COPTERS"

Two Hanscom pilots give hints on learning "copters" and protecting your avionics

HANSCOM UPDATE

Who's doing what...where?



WHERE IT BEGAN KITTYHAWK – 100 YEARS LATER



Shelia and Jeff Bauer holding ACONE banner

They came from thousands of miles away, not only from the USA but also from all over the world. Pilots, mechanics, technicians and just about anyone interested in aviation or the historical events that made flight as we know it today possible, converged upon that small windswept dune known as Kill Devil Hills, situated on the beautiful Outer Banks of North Carolina to witness events that echoed a dream the Wright Brothers brought to reality on that memorable day, December 17, 1903.

On that eventful day, with Orville at the controls and Wilbur on the ground, the plane made four flights, the longest one covering 852 feet in 59 seconds with an average speed of 31 miles an hour.

The event was well represented by many New Englanders, and especially Hanscom pilots. The EAA and ACONE (The Aero Club of new England), two of the more active aviation associations in the country, were part of the 200,000 plus visitors that exciting day.

One of the early arrivals was Shelia and Jeff Bauer, both members of ACONE. Jeff felt it was one of the most exciting events he had ever attended and penned a description of his feelings during the emotional event.

"Kitty Hawk...the Wright Brothers. All these terms join together to form an image of a rickety old biplane that spent a mere twelve seconds in the air, and changed the earth. As we are all aware this was the one hundredth anniversary of controlled flight. The chance to go to Kitty Hawk at any time would present an opportunity that I'm certain very few of us would pass up. Having our own Shelia Bauer as the F.A.A.'s project person for the event afforded me an opportunity that was too good to miss. Shelia had spent over a year working on the Centennial celebration. And I spent a year hearing about it. The changes in plans and funding were endless. But the event was priceless."

"... The day of the anniversary on the seventeenth was pouring rain. This hardly changed the mood and the spirits of the 40,000 people assembled on that day. The sixteenth however, gave us the opportunity to attend an evening cocktail reception and to meet the F.A.A. administrator Marion Blakey. Other people that were in attendance: namely Charles Lindbergh's grandson Eric, John Glenn, Chuck Yeager, and just about everyone I'd ever imagined in the world of aviation,

living today. I was more than pleased to be introduced as being a Director of The Aero Club of New England, the oldest aviation club in the country. I don't know if it made anyone besides me feel special, but everyone was impressed with the fact the Club is one year older than powered flight, and somewhat quizzical how we were able to manage that feat. I explained this at length."



"On the day of the event we were able to take photographs. The one I'm particularly fond of is the Aero Club banner being unfurled at the Wright Brother's Monument. As you can see from the photo the wind was blowing at a good clip. Unfortunately this wind decreased during the course of the day until it went critically below the ten knots necessary to lift the copy of the Wright Flyer into the air. The weather didn't affect the appearance of President Bush, however. Having never seen the President in person, his arrival had tremendous impact on me. His arrival was likewise greeted with a tumultuous cheer from the crowd. Regardless what anyone's politics was on that day, hearing the President speak at Kitty Hawk, at the Centennial, was something I'm sure we all will remember. Other members of the Club in attendance were Dr. Gary Kearney, Jack Ferns, Bill Richardson, and Martha Dunbar."



"I can't help but feel that every member of the Club has the spirit of that first flight as a part of them. This spirit is so well expressed in the Club's Constitution, "To foster, encourage, and advance the science of aeronautics and all kindred and

allied sciences". I think we would all make the Wright Brothers proud."

The event opened with a weeklong celebration of airplane exhibits and the anticipation of a re-enactment of the historic flight.

The 13-year-old great great grandnephew of Wilbur and Orville Wright, Keith Yoerg was in attendance and expressed an interest in "someday going into space".

For those who have been to North Carolina's Outer Banks, it is normally pictured as a quiet, pristine area boasting some of the most beautiful beaches in the country. But this day, it was one of the most exciting locations in the country.

The Outer Banks had undergone a \$10 million transformation, featuring two stages for musical acts including singer Patti LaBelle who was nominated for a Grammy for her rendition of "Way Up There," the song originally commissioned by NASA to commemorate the Centennial of Flight. LaBelle brought the song into national prominence, when she sang it at the first memorial service for the seven Space Shuttle Columbia astronauts. She sang "Way Up There" at the National Cathedral, Washington, on Feb. 6, just five days after the Columbia crew was lost, Feb. 1, 2003, while returning to Earth after completing their successful mission.

There are few moments in history that have done more to capture the spirit of that first historic flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina....

twelve seconds that changed the world! The first successful sustained powered flight in a heavier-than-air machine made by Wilbur and Orville Wright, December 17, 1903.

On the day of the reenactment at Kill Devil Hills, you could feel the emotion and excitement that permeated the crowd. Unfortunately, the winds were not cooperating.

Around 12:30 p.m. Dr. Kevin Kochersberger took controls of the world's most accurate 1903 Wright Flyer reproduction for a reenactment of Orville Wright's first flight. However, the engine RPM was lower than expected due to the wet weather. The wind speed also dropped as the Flyer maneuvered down the 200-foot rail. The hopes of a second attempt at 3:45 p.m. also were dashed by low winds on the final day of the First Flight Centennial celebration at Wright Brothers National Memorial.

Of course, a hundred years ago, Wright brothers were able to wait for the optimal weather to fly, but because of time constraints, waiting out the weather and winds was not possible.

A number of Hanscom pilots made the trek to the Outer Banks to witness the event, many flying their own aircraft. Among them were the following who sent us their comments.

From Jim Baum, N6444W – Hangar J18

"I am happy to report that my wife, two children and I attended the events on the 17th. We flew Tuesday the 16th into Manteo (KMQL) and returned to KBED on the morning of the 18th. The flight down was great VFR but on the way back we were returning behind the front that darkened the day on the 17th and landed in some dicey winds! Gotta love the 230kt groundspeed in our P210 on the way home though. Overall it was an outstanding trip and it was great to be part of such an historic event."

From Sheldon Apzell,

"Dennis Shapiro and I both attended the Centennial of Flight celebration. We flew down in our Beech Baron, N8197R, and had a wonderful time. We met John Glenn, Scott Crossfield, Elizabeth Dole, and many other very interesting people. Unfortunately, the weather on Wednesday December 17 was pretty miserable with rain and very little wind...not conducive for recreating the Wright brother's first flight with the Wright Flyer reproduction so painstakingly constructed by Ken Hyde and his associates. Nevertheless, the arrival of President Bush was very much appreciated by all of the attendees and I found his speech to be quite inspiring.



Three members of Associated Pilots flew N304EB to the Kittyhawk Wright Brothers celebration, Skip (Roland) Boucher, James Tull and Neil Olken.

Roland Boucher had this to say. "I flew down to attend the event along with Neil Olken and Jim Tull in our Cessna 206G N304EB. We landed at Manteo airport.

"Tuesday, the day before the re-enactment, was a picture perfect day. The sky was a deep blue and there was a light breeze and warm temperatures. After visiting the various exhibits we chose a spot on the hill near the memorial from which we had front row seats for the fly-by's

and the aerobatic shows. It is hard to pick a best of show from the many aerial artists, but Patty Wagstaff was certainly among the best.”

“This was also the day that honored the 100 greatest names in aviation, including a large contingent who were present: Chuck Yeager; John Glenn; Scott Carpenter; Neil Armstrong; Bob Hoover; etc.”

“Wednesday dawned with a low overcast and mist along with cooler temps. Well before 10:35 AM, 100 years to the exact minute of the first flight, the heavens opened up and it poured rain.”

“President Bush spoke at around 9AM and the rain was still coming down. The field where the re-enactment was to take place had been turned into a swamp where there had been a level sandy area the day before. The EAA reproduction was still in its hanger at the appointed time. We were all hoping it would be rolled out at any minute and we were standing patiently, looking toward the flight track, when out of the low mist and clouds a large gray shape began to emerge. Shortly we could make out the unmistakable shape of the B2 Stealth Bomber, directly over the track that was laid out for the re-enactment. Had the EAA aircraft been rolling on schedule, the two would have been airborne at the same moment in the same location. What a sight that would have been. But such was not to be.”

Bill Richardson, a member of the ACONE group, attended and was duly impressed. In his words, “The Navy F-14s and F-18s and the Marine Corps V-22 “Osprey” flight demo (its first public appearance) were suitably impressive.”

“The FAA Agency displays were fascinating with the theme, ‘Starting the Next Hundred Years’, ...very appropriate. There was a major effort to engage and challenge the younger generation to strive to do great things. Distinguished speakers picked up on this theme, with John Glenn particularly pointed his challenge for the kids to



“Stand on his shoulders, the way he had stood on the Wright Brothers’ shoulders, to overcome obstacles and achieve their dreams.”

“We had a great time with our group of four airplane nuts: Jack Ferns, ACONE Member, N3N restorer and Director of NH Aeronautics; Dick Ludders, Aviation Planner and aeronautical history buff. Bud Coward, Director of Aeronautics for the State of South Carolina, J-3 Cub owner and ex-Air Force transport driver; and myself, a Navy dad and USCG AuxAir Pilot.”

“In addition to President Bush, who spoke as he stood in the rain and got thoroughly soaked with the rest of us, other speakers were introduced by John Travolta, who said that he hoped he’d be able to do a fly-by later with his 707.”

“Travolta was saying something to the VIPs when he stopped in mid-sentence, and squinted into the rain. They all leaned over, including Armstrong, Aldrin, Glenn, Yeager, Crossfield, Hoover and others.

“Out of the mist and rain, right down above the trees at 400 feet, amidst streaming sheets of water, came AIR FORCE ONE, buzzing the field! Nuts! He came by, wagging his wings! With “Dub-yuh” waving out the window!”

“I can imagine Travolta saying to Hoover, ‘Man, I have GOT to get me one of THOSE!’”



“Many of the great photos you see were submitted by Dr. Gary Kearny, Aero Club of New England.”

“FORGET RUNWAYS. I’D RATHER LAND AND DEPART FROM CONFINED AREAS.”



Those were the words of Bill Copp, helicopter pilot, as he described the fun and accuracy of pinpoint landings in such areas as construction sites, docks, a friend’s yard or in front of his hangar at Hanscom.

Bill has been well known in aviation circles for over 31 years, not only as a pilot with fixed wing, helicopter, multi engine and instrument ratings, but also as a qualified A & P (Aircraft and Powerplant mechanic) and IA (Inspection Authorization certificate) rating.

Some years ago, he was featured on the front cover of Plane and Pilot Magazine for the impeccable restoration he performed on a Swift aircraft.

Much of his skill and creativeness in aircraft repair and restoration can be attributed to his vast experience in machinery. He is no novice when it comes to manufacturing parts or building things mechanical. Presently, he is owner and president of Lex-Aire Products in West Billerica. The company, which has been in business for over 20 years, manufactures paint spray equipment and is distributed nationally to the automotive, furniture and home building markets. Because of its unique design, attributed to patents held by Bill, the equipment offers an 80 per cent reduction in mist when compared to many other brands.

Helicopter flying is relatively new with Bill since he obtained his rating within the last two years. As Bill says, “It wasn’t easy. In fact, after the first 45 minutes of instruction, I was ready to give up. There were so many things to do simultaneously that I felt only an octopus could have performed the duties. In fact, if you ever felt macho about your flying, take a few lessons in ‘copters’. Believe me, it’s a real lesson in humility.”

Bill started the lessons after he was given a two hour Christmas present for helicopter lessons. The first five hours were spent concentrating on hovering, which he said were extremely difficult for him to learn because of his fixed wing experience. As he mentioned, “You’ve got both hands doing something and both feet doing something. It’s the one time you really need coordination.”

“But the most exciting part of flying helicopters, is not the low flying in minimal weather, but having the ability to being able to land just about anywhere, assuming of course, you have the land owner’s permission.”

He also enjoys the “Position Arrival” and “Position Departure” approvals he gets from the tower or ATC. This eliminates standing in

Continued on next page, column 1

line on taxiways waiting for departure or lining up with a dozen other aircraft for landing. If necessary, he can land right in front of his hangar.

In addition to flying a Robinson R22, which he now owns, Bill also built a Rotorway kit, which took seven months to finish. He found his machine shop was integral to the success of the project, since he was able to utilize a digital protractor to a plus or minus one-tenth of one degree to set up the drive system. The fiberglass cab was somewhat difficult he mentioned, before he could get the perfect fit, but again, thanks to his technical background, he successfully accomplished the task. The basic kit cost \$64,000.00 but by the time he finished with radios, etc., his cost ran to \$85,000.00.

According to Bill, the rotorway kit is a very stable aircraft and hovers very well compared with some production helicopters. But he added the Robinson R22 is easier to control because of the governor. As for



learning to fly helicopters, Bill said, "I know some people feel you're better off to learn helicopter flying without previous experience, and they may be right. I feel differently, however. I think a pilot who has previous skills in flying

understands navigation and communications better and might find it easier, once he gets the coordination aspects squared away."

In addition, to his manufacturing business, he has started a second commercial business: helicopters for aerial photography, site selection, security or surveillance. Contractors hire him to fly over their sites to review and photograph work in progress. In one case he was asked to fly over Central Park in New York at 500 feet for photographs; in another job, he flew over Boston at a low altitude for aerial work. In every case, he says ATC is extremely cooperative and offers assistance to him in any way they can. The aircraft, incidentally, does not need gimbals to steady the photo shoot, according to Bill. The rotor blade dampens any turbulence, unlike fixed wing aircraft that may bounce around because of convection currents or winds. Bill also prides himself in being able to accommodate prospective customers for photo shoots upon one hour's notice, seven days a week.

Some people may remember, several months ago, local media heralded Bill as a hero when his helicopter ran into trouble while trying to land at a friend's yard. The craft's tail rotor began rotating wildly to the left and Bill knew the helicopter was uncontrollable. Realizing the "copter" could roll over and there were people near his landing site who might be injured in the mishap, Bill opted to forego his own safety and gain altitude to move away from the people. Although the rotation wouldn't stop, he got the helicopter to 500 feet and executed an auto rotation into trees 120 feet tall and then crashed to the ground. As Bill tells the story, "My left arm was pinned under me and I couldn't see too well. There was blood gushing over my face and eyes and I felt I couldn't move. Suddenly I heard the sound of ignition and I knew what was about to happen. With all the strength I could muster, I smashed the windshield and crawled out just as the plane exploded into a ball of fire."

Bill was rushed to the hospital and within a few weeks was back at work. When asked if he would return to helicopter flying after that horrible experience, he simply replied, "As soon as I get mobile and get myself another 'copter' I'll be right back in action. Man, I miss those confined landings and departures. They're such a thrill."

And Bill Copp is a man of his word. If you see a Robinson R22 landing or departing from the Pine Hill area, chances are it's Bill-flying off to do a photo shoot or surveillance trip, enjoying not having to taxi long distances with "position arrival and departure" approvals from Hanscom Tower personnel.

THE FREEDOM OF FLIGHT

Since the days of the ancient Greeks with their mythological tales of Icarus flying too close to the sun and having his wings melt to the carvings left by the South American Incan civilization, people the world over have been fascinated with flying.

But if you've ever taken to the skies on a crystal clear day with the sun glittering over the lakes and streams or soared lazily along a mountain wave or watched the twinkling of stars as you flew through the night, you know only too well the meaning of the following poem that typifies the thrill of flying written by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

HIGH FLIGHT

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.*



SUNRISE ON A TRIP TO EUROPE.

Aboard were: Michael Alper, Alan Penzias and John Wood.

High Flight was composed by Pilot Officer John Gillespie Magee, Jr., an American serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Born in Shanghai, China in 1922 to missionary parents, his father an American and his mother a British citizen, enlisted in the RCAF in 1940 and England for combat duty in July 1941.

In August or September 1941, Pilot Officer Magee composed *High Flight* and sent a copy to his parents. Several months later, on December 11, 1941 his Spitfire collided with another plane over England and Magee, only 19 years of age, crashed to his death.

For those of us who take to the skies, there is no greater thrill or feeling of solitude than cruising through the air, gazing at sleepy towns or villages below as we travel to our \$100.00 hamburger destination.

Of course there are dozens of other ways to enjoy the scenery of the sky above or the ground below in addition to a powered aircraft. Try leaf looking from a glider, hot-air balloon, or ski lift—or dangling from the side of a rock.

Continued on next page, column 1

Or try hang gliding. Dangling from a harness and bobbing with air currents may be the closest some humans will ever come to flying.

Then we have bi-planes, warbirds, jet trainers and more. Little planes and big planes for big people and little people.

Perhaps you'd like to try your hand at dog fighting. They have air programs for that adventure. Then we have the ultimate skydive adventure -a military-style, high altitude, low open parachute jump.

Finally, you can make your own history-making first step. One of the greatest moments in world history featured one small step – that incredible day in July of 1969 when Neil Armstrong took his first step on the moon. You can your own history-making first step, by becoming one of the first tourists in the world to apply to Russia's Cosmonaut Training Program.

What does it cost? We don't know exactly but we're told it can range from \$15 million to \$25 million; depending on the mission profile.

For just plain fun and camaraderie, perhaps you'd like to become part of ACONE, the Aero Club of New England and the oldest aero club in America or become part of the Ninety-Nines, women who just love to fly. There are those who fly for pleasure, those who incorporate flying into their businesses, and those for whom flying is a career.

Much of The Ninety-Nines' activities center around getting into their planes and just having fun. Fly-outs for the day, or a weekend, are common in many chapters. Fly-outs often are to airports to visit local attractions, aviation museums, FAA facilities, and, of course, restaurants. The fly-outs are sometimes to resorts or get-away spots to "unwind" with fellow pilots and 49 1/2s (a 99's significant other). And, any air show is always a good excuse to go flying.

Flying Fun Days, sponsored by a Ninety-Nines chapter for other 99s, are a time to have a little friendly competition with each other. Events often include a poker run, spot landing contest, and flour bombing contest.

Flying is indeed, a freedom and a choice, harbored by the very few intrepid characters in our nation who delight in feeling the power of mastering their destiny in the air above.

Today there are over 600,000 licensed airplane pilots. Over 128,000 jobs are generated by air transportation support services, such as air traffic control and other airport operations. In addition, aircraft mechanics number 126,000 to keep our planes running. We have some 19,000 airports across the country that house approximately 218,000 general aviation (private) aircraft. Projections are for an increase especially because of leasebacks and fractionalization programs.

Yes, the freedom of flight has changed enormously since those early flights by the Wright brothers. But the one thing that hasn't changed is that exhilarating feel that only a pilot, soaring through "that wild blue yonder" experiences.

Perhaps it can best be summed up by Marisa Rosetti, a young 17 year old who received her first flight lesson on New Year's day at Hanscom. After experiencing climbs and descents, turns and banks and a host of other things that usually occur during that first introductory flight, she remarked, "I loved talking to the tower operators at Lawrence and Hanscom. They were so nice. But the most awesome thing about the trip was the feeling I got. I loved the freedom of flying in the sky, watching the clouds and looking at the little towns with houses laid out so perfectly, but above all, I loved the feeling that I had complete control over everything I did.

"Out of the mouths of babes"

***If you have news you feel may be of interest to readers of
The HANSCOM BEACON, please direct your information to:***

Editor: Bill Cuccinello

Tel: 781 863 0257; Fax: 781 674 3163

Email: billvc@bellatlantic.net

NEW ENGLAND AVIATION COMMUNITY RESPONDS FAVORABLY TO AMERICAN FREE SKIES ASSOCIATION BEING ESTABLISHED AT HANSCOM

Over the years there have been many opponents to general aviation that have ranged from environmental issues to airport expansion. Not only at Hanscom field, but also throughout the country.

Feeling that this may be the time for pilots to band together and protect their rights and love of aviation, a non-profit organization called, FREE SKIES has been established.

The Board of Directors is currently comprised of:

Peter H. Schmidt, President –who flies a Pitts S-2C out of ASH,

Louise C. Anderson, Treasurer -who flies a 172 out of Marlborough and Drew S. Ganter, Clerk – an acrobatic pilot.

Recently, a lawsuit was filed against three Massachusetts aerobatic pilots, each a member of the International Aerobatic Club (IAC) Chapter 35, and aviation business owner and flight school operating out of Hanscom Field (BED). alleging that aerobatic flights over plaintiffs' homes have caused damage. The attorney filing the suit is also the attorney for Stop the Noise (STN) a local group that according to Free Skies seeks to "remove the aerobatic and recreational flyers from the skies over our private property and if successful, could have dire national ramifications for the freedom of flight."

According to FREE Skies, some local property owners want to eliminate aircraft operations within earshot of their land, even though the pilots are operating legally in federal airspace, according to federal aviation regulations. Local pilots, however say they are willing to work with property owners to create a compromise that benefits everyone.

After more than 30 written complaints were investigated by the local FAA FSDO and found to be groundless, Free Skies stated "the attorney decided to end-run federal law and go after individual pilots by filing individual state 'noise nuisance' lawsuits. He is a member of the group, Stop The Noise, which according to its website seeks to put an end to all recreational, flight training, and aerobatic operations that occur near their properties. (STN also targets motorcycles.)"

EAA's concern is that this could be the start of a national movement to use state and local nuisance laws to harass pilots and force them to personally fund expensive defenses, thus preventing them from developing and flying in FAA-approved flight training and aerobatic practice areas in the national airspace system.

FREE SKIES states that EAA and AOPA are supporting their efforts, and plan to make use of much of the excellent work already done by AOPA's Fly Friendly materials so that they are not reinventing the wheel.

FREE SKIES states, "The lawsuits in Massachusetts are a wakeup call to all GA pilots. Stop The Noise has declared their desire to see an end to ALL recreational flying. If we pilots want to keep that desire from spreading to other groups and to other parts of the country, we need to proactively engage concerned people in our communities and find ways to democratically accommodate each other."

In the meantime, AOPA has joined the fray in an attempt to aid the local pilots. In the February issue of FLIGHT TRAINING MAGAZINE, Phil Boyer, AOPA president stated, "AOPA has been directly involved in this issue for over a year. We are concerned that anti-flying

Continued on next page, column 1

5

activists elsewhere might try similar 'nuisance lawsuits. We're working at multiple levels to discourage them."

In a statement to pilots, Boyer added, "the biggest bone of contention between aviators and people on the ground seems to be noise". He suggested "that pilots be very much aware of Fly Friendly procedures, such as climb to altitude as soon as possible after take off and reduce the rpm on constant speed props as soon as practicable. And," he added, "some airports have initiated curfews, prohibitions against touch-and-go-landings, and even outright bans on flight training activities during certain hours."

According to the FREE SKIES board, they have more than doubled their membership since the first announcements went online, but are seeking additional volunteers to assist in spreading the word to others to help support their vision and mission.

If you are interested in joining Free Skies, more information can be obtained by writing

American Free Skies Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 808

Sudbury, MA 01776

AVIONICS – THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND HOW TO HELP YOUR AVIONICS IN THE FUTURE

Want to really find out what flying was really like in "the olden days"?

Sit down with a group of old, pilots (notice, we didn't say old, bold pilots because they don't exist. Old, bold pilots all go West) and let them reminisce about the early days of flying and avionics. Let them tell you about following the old radio beams, the dah-dit and the dit-dah of navigation. Have them describe the practice of putting names on rooftops to identify towns and lights that gave direction. And above all, ask them to describe the huge, cumbersome radios that overheated in summer, conked out in winter and often failed when you needed them most. And you'll understand why those pilots are experts in pilotage.



To get a better perspective of the avionics of yesteryear and what the future might have in store for our "birds", we interviewed Bob Doppler, President of Aviation Electronics located in BED. Bob has over 43 years experience in avionics, starting with the original East Coast Aero tech when it was run by John Griffin Sr, one of the "grand old men of aviation".

Q: Bob, when did you start Aviation Electronics and what was it like working on those old radios?

I started Aviation Electronics in 1985 at a variety of locations on this field, from small cubbyholes to my present location, which I'm happy to say is not only large enough but includes a nice, warm hangar for us to work in. Back in the early days, radios came with crystals and tubes. To change frequencies, you had to pull out the old crystal. All tuners were set up like wafers so that if one wafer broke, the entire radio went kaput. I remember the old Cessna 120 utilized a Mitchell Air Boy. It worked with both A and B batteries. It transmitted on VHF and received on the beacon frequency and when you wanted to change frequencies, you used plug-in crystals. It wasn't conducive to easy flying, especially in rough weather.

Q: Were there many manufacturers in those days?

NARCO was king of the hill. They used tubes and would provide clinics for us to learn the operation and to teach our customers. Most sessions taught the VOR and localizer operation. Then of course, along came the transistorized radios and along with it we saw King, Honeywell, Collins and a host of others jump on the bandwagon. And, I might add, for the better because the competition really advanced avionics by leaps and bounds.

Q: Example?

Look at the improvements. Transponders, GPS, radios that hold and store several frequencies, GPS units that automatically set you up for the next frequency and above all, how about the new GPSs that set up the approach for you and lead you through it step by step?

Q: I assume, however, you still have many of the same problems repairing sets or troubleshooting?

Yes and no. If you're asking about crawling under the panel or troubleshooting in the aircraft, you're right. It's still a nightmare crawling under the panel and troubleshooting wires. Of course, in my younger days I was slimmer and somewhat more agile, so I could handle it. But now, I try to leave that for the younger members of my staff. They're in better shape.

But as for locating problems, we now have better and more accurate instruments for testing and there's less soldering involved. In most cases, it's more feasible and economical to replace the part.

Q: How about warranties?

They're getting better all the time. Many warranties run to two years and extended warranties are available. I normally don't suggest extended warranties to customers because if anything is going to happen, it will usually happen in the first six months when they unit is still under warranty by the manufacturer. Oftentimes, I find it is more economical for the customer to forego the extended warranty and pay for repairs as needed.

Q: Is there anything we, as pilots, can do for preventive maintenance?

You bet. If you're not using your aircraft often, the knobs on the radios get sluggish or gunky. Make it point to use them often, turning them to different frequencies so that they don't get sticky inside. An example is transponders that are always on 1200. Turn the knobs often on the ground. Remember, anything mechanical should be cycled or it gets sticky inside. The same goes for radio knobs.

Don't throw headsets near the compass at the completion of your flight. Oftentimes, the magnet in the headset affects the compass. And by the same token, keep you eye on the compass for leaks, bubbles or cloudiness. That's normally a sign that your compass diaphragm is getting old and brittle.

Q: Is there anything else you suggest we do?

The customer can actually make our troubleshooting easier, which in the end will save him time and money. Rather than just call the shop

and say the radio isn't working, try to give us a better picture as to what happened when it went out. Does it light up? Do you hear voices or only squelch sounds? Did your transponder reply light up when ATC asked you to reply? In other words, try to give as much detail as possible. It'll make our job go faster and save you money.

Q: How about sunscreens on the panel?

Definitely. Heat is horrible to avionics and to have the sun beating down through your windshield and heating up everything under the panel is not conducive to avionics longevity. A sunscreen on the panel is invaluable.

Q: Many people often buy used equipment. What's your opinion?

I've seen some real good buys and some disasters. If you're buying from someone you know, that helps. If you're buying from an unknown source, I'm skeptical. Remember, unless a person has traded that unit for an upgrade, he might be unloading it because of problems. I've seen some really bad scenes so be careful. Also, be certain the asking price is legit. Too often, I've seen pilots buy avionics they felt was a good deal, when they could have bought a new unit at the same price.

Q: Finally, what about the future?

Need you ask? Just look through the aviation magazines. GPSs are coming out, coupled with multi function displays that resemble sectionals. The new Garmin CNX80 GPS and the new MX20, a moving map display that pops up like a sectional. But hang on. Over the next six months, I predict you're going to see a plethora of units that entail weather, communications and navigation. It'll be like a pilot's candy store.

Q: Bob, you've given us some great insights. Anything you want to add?

Yes. Remember the most important thing of all in flying. Don't weld you head in the cockpit, hypnotized by all your beautiful and functional instrumentation. Look outside once in a while for other traffic. In other words, get your head out of the cockpit occasionally.

NEW AIRPORT SAFETY COMMITTEE (BASC) BEING SET UP AT HANSCOM FIELD

Years ago, Hanscom boasted a very active safety committee that oversaw activities around the airport and made appropriate recommendations for improved safety.

Recently, Jim Mathieu, Hanscom Field Operations Manager and Ken MacDonald, Aviation safety Counselor (ASC) and consultant to the FAA runway incursions program held a meeting to discuss the viability of re-instituting the program for greater awareness at Hanscom for airport safety.

The first Safety Committee meeting was held in the Massport conference room on January 14, 2003 with the following attendees:

Ken MacDonald, Hanscom Pilot and FAA (ASC), Paul Seguin, Air Force Fire Department, Dave Bayley, BED Air Traffic Manager, Bill Leahy, TSA, Rick Blaze, Signature Flight Support, David Kehoe, East Coast Aero Tech, Lee Pritchard, Air Force Safety, Juan Gaud, Air Force Safety, Bill Cuccinello (ASC), Hanscom pilot and Editor of the Hanscom Beacon and Jim Mathieu, Massport Operations Manager.

Jim Mathieu gave an overview of the past activities of the committee and explained that since the Boston FSDO has relocated from Hanscom to Lexington, the close interaction between the airport and FSDO is not as close as it once was. The goal of the committee will be to reestablish an active working group that can address safety issues affecting all aspects of the airport.

Ken MacDonald highlighted the minutes of the last meeting held several years ago. Topics included airport driver training, pedestrian devia-

tions on taxiways, and installing stops signs at designated locations. Ken also gave an overview of the BED Surface Incident Prevention Plan (SIPP) that was developed after a Regional Runway Surface Action Team (RSAT) meeting held on March 12, 2002. Ken noted that all items identified at BED during the RSAT meeting had been corrected.

The following items, for follow up prior to the next meeting, were discussed:

There is concern about a new flight training practice area that has been established 3-5 miles west of the airport. This area causes potential conflict with traffic departing Runway 29.

Although the Vehicle Service Road (VSR) passes through a portion of Air Force Base property there is a fair amount of private vehicle traffic traversing the area. Some of these vehicles do not have approved airport vehicle ramp permits.

There is interest in acquiring a driver training video available from FAA. This availability would allow tenants to institute their individual driver training while awaiting airport-initiated training.

Flight restrictions and planning for the upcoming Democratic National Convention (DNC) to be held in Boston in July 2004.

The group agreed that initially, a quarterly BASC committee meeting frequency would be established.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 7, 2004 at 1515 in the conference room.

HANSCOM'S VEGETATION PLAN UNDERWAY

There's good news for pilots making approaches to Hanscom. You may have already noticed it with the trucks rolling back and forth around the airport.

A vegetation management program, now underway that involves vegetation removal at all four runway ends should provide additional safety. After some two years of negotiations, the various conservation commissions in the four abutting towns approved the plan.

Helicopter removal will be used in some areas with herbicides being used to help control re-growth. It's also expected that the landscape will be changed by virtue of different plant types, such as lower ground cover and shrubs, making for a lower height problem, thus preventing obstacles to aircraft in the future.

Phase II, which involves trees in the Bedford Town Forest and Jordan Conservation land at the Runway 23 end, has not been scheduled yet. Options for this part of the project are still being explored with the FAA and the Town of Bedford. Trees in this area were last cut in 1981.

EMAIL ADDRESS LIST FOR HANSCOM RESIDENTS BEING COMPILED

The Hanscom Airport Operations Department is continually updating its tenant information database. They would like to add your e-mail address to the database, so they can forward notices and important information to you. If you are interested, please forward your e-mail address, as well as any other address and phone number changes, to: beacon@massport.com. This address can also be used to report any problems or outages with your T-hangar or tiedown as well.



Barbara Patzner
Airport Director

HANSCOM UPDATE

Each year, Massport presents the State of Hanscom to the Hanscom Field Advisory Commission, which includes representation from the aviation and residential communities. This provides an opportunity to look at our performance and accomplishments for the previous year and our goals for the coming year.

Aviation activity levels reflect many factors, with the economy traditionally being of particular significance. However, 2002 was impacted by the events of September 11, 2001, causing some unexpected shifts in the fleet mix. A 2003 to 2002 comparison may be reflecting some correction for those changes, some continuation of those changes, and some economic implications.

Hanscom's overall aviation activity decreased 10.7 percent in 2003 as compared to 2002. Piston aircraft and helicopter operations remained stable in terms of their percentage of the total activity. However, there was a 38.0 percent decline in turboprop operations, caused primarily by the 55 percent decline in commuter aircraft activity. Business jet operations only decreased 1.5 percent. The two commuter airlines, Shuttle America and Boston-Maine, carried 36,099 passengers in and out of Bedford airport, a 47 percent decrease as compared to 2002.

The losses in aviation activity are reflected in Hanscom's financial performance in Fiscal Year (FY) 2003, which ran from July 2002 through June 2003. Revenues dropped almost 12 percent. Meanwhile costs escalated, primarily due to a 241 percent increase in airport insurance costs. The operating budget closed with a deficit of \$546,000. Adding in amortization, the deficit exceeded \$2.3 million.

I am aware that there are cycles in aviation. At the same time, I am committed to looking at all the cost centers to determine how we can more aggressively achieve better financial performance. Our new Hanscom Business Manager, Joe Scarfo will be working with me toward that end. Last summer a number of our rates and charges were increased, and we implemented a landing fee for transient aircraft, which will help. Fees will be reviewed annually, and we are looking at cost savings measures as well.

While the most recent calendar and fiscal years show some discouraging results, Massport remains committed to operating a first class general aviation airport that puts safety and security first. In 2003, Massport installed upgraded security fencing in the terminal area, and this will be extended to the Pine Hill area in the spring. A badging program was implemented, and Massport has badged almost 1000 individuals. Vegetation removal has taken place recently to meet FAA requirements for safe approach surfaces. Sodium formate was applied to the runways and taxiways during inclement weather this winter, the first time since Massport assumed responsibility for the airfield that chemicals have been used for runway deicing. All of this has been done while ensuring we take all the necessary precautions to protect the environment.

The coming year presents continuing challenges. Shuttle America recently announced that it will terminate service at Hanscom. Boston-Maine has announced that it is planning to resume service at Hanscom, traveling between Bedford and Trenton, and other airlines have expressed similar interest. Maintaining some level of commuter service benefits us all. Not only does it bring Massport \$1 million in FAA Airport Improvement Program funds, but it means the airport can support such ancillary services as car rentals and a small café in the terminal.

We have interested parties in developing corporate hangars, which will help accommodate some of our larger tenants. Liberty Mutual

plans to build on the Hangar 1 site, demolishing both Hangar 1 and Hangar 3 and building a 36,000 square foot hangar with office space. Massport is issuing a Request for Proposals for development on the Hangar 24 site (previously MIT), and it is intended that the flight schools will be part of that development project. Other corporate hangar and T-hangar development will be pursued in the next year as well.

There is never a quiet moment at a busy airport, and there are many aspects to balance. Our monthly tenant meetings (usually the third Tuesday of the month) have provided me with the opportunity to hear your concerns, and they help me share updates on a myriad of projects and issues. I encourage you to attend, and look forward to seeing you either on the field (with your badge clearly visible!) or off.

Barbara Patzner
Airport Director



Medivac chopper on a mission!

NEW HANSCOM BADGING PROGRAM IN FULL SWING

If you're not sporting one of the new colored badges issued to personnel requiring access to the airport operating area, you'd better not trespass or you'll find yourself immediately stopped by State Police or Massport personnel.

The implementation of the Hanscom ID badge program starts with a communication and education process: people are being stopped and questioned if badges are not visible. Badges are required to be displayed on the outermost garment and if this is problematic during cold weather when wearing winter clothing, try using an armband to display the badge. It's a good way to help solve the problem. Wearing the badge inside buildings is also advised. It helps everyone know who "lives" at Hanscom and be cognizant of those who don't.

Massport intends to badge anyone with airfield access. To do this, Massport has designated the entire airfield a Secure Identification Display Area (SIDA), and SIDA areas fall under TSA regulations. TSA requires those in the SIDA area to be badged, escorted or monitored.

To date Massport has issued 960 badges with 200 applications pending. Checks or a credit card must be included with any new applications. Security Training is conducted Wednesdays at noon on the second floor in the Civil Air Terminal. The State Police are available for fingerprinting on Tuesdays, 5-8 p.m. and the first and third Wednesday of each month, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Be a good neighbor.
FLY FRIENDLY. Use AOPA or NBAA
noise abatement procedures.**



THE CASE FOR MIXED EMOTIONS

It always happens—never fails. You throw out the old and bring in the new. You discard memories, some pleasant, some not so pleasant and swap them for hopefully new expectations, advanced electronics, increased visibility and the comfortable, pleasant surroundings that the new tower offers. And with it, mixed emotions. Should you feel happy or sad?

That sums up the demolition of the old Hanscom tower.

As men and machinery demolished the building, long time employees and pilots watched the demolition with a tear in their eye; yet, waxed enthusiastically about the new tower—and with it, all the wonderful attributes to be expected.

According to Dave Bayley, Tower Chief, “For many of the folks working here, there was not too much lament over the loss of the old tower. There were some memories that were a part of the building, but most of the controllers were glad to be out of the cramped and antiquated quarters and into the new tower building with it's newer equipment and larger space.”

“The old tower demolition started midway through September with the crew salvaging whatever they could— copper pipes, wire, and etc. The hard task came when they had to remove the asbestos from the old building. That process took the longest of any single phase of demolition. During all of the salvage and abatement, the crew worked diligently to ensure that there was no debris flying around the airport surface. About a month after starting, the crew was ready to start disassembling the tower shaft.”

“First they had to break out all the windows which was a project in itself because the glass was not safety glass. They secured plywood panels to each large glass pane and then broke it from inside the cab. You can imagine the size of some of those glass shards. No injuries were reported so the workers must have done a great job in safety. Occasionally, the tower operators would steal glances from the cab as some of that work was being done.”

“Finally the day came when they were ready to cut the shaft into sections and lower it to the ground. The work was complicated by the way the catwalk was constructed but after some head scratching and planning the crew figured out where to remove the steel skin from the building and then make the cuts to the I-beams that were the skeleton of the tower. The crane would carry the load as the cuts were made and then each section was lowered to the ground to be hauled away as scrap.”

Bayley continued, “The whole process was over in about two months. Now we are waiting to see what will be put in its place. Our Airways Facility group is slated to get a new prefab building on the site when the weather breaks but that is somewhat subject to the FAA's budget constraints. In the meantime, we are enjoying the benefits of our new building. Soon we will have new color radar displays that are tied into the Boston Consolidated Tracon (BCT).”

AROUND HANSCOM

Mary Gabriel, Safety Program Manager for Airworthiness at the Boston Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) announces that two members have been added as Aviation Safety Counselors to the board:

The new board members are:

Chester Motyka, commercial pilot, ground instructor, and mechanic/IA, proprietor of New England Aero Service based at Plymouth, MA, and a past recipient of the AMT of the Year Award and the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award.

The second member, **Robert Doppler**, is a commercial pilot, flight instructor, radio and instrument repairman and proprietor of Aviation Electronics, Inc. on Hanscom Field.

According to Mary Gabriel, both members should provide the board with a new dimension to the strategies and seminar activities for the coming year.

Congrats to **Professor Stevens**. That's what we'll call **Bill Stevens**, Program Safety Manager at the Boston FSDO if he accepts the offer to teach part time at North Shore Community College. The subjects will include Human Factors and Aviation Law. With Bill's experience in law enforcement and aviation, he'd be an invaluable asset to teach any curriculum, as proven by the success of the many safety seminars he's performed for the FAA.

Larry Jorash, Manager of **Signature Flight** suggests that all pilots be especially cognizant of anticipated Presidential Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR). Since presidential movement TFRs can be issued with little advance notice, pilots should check with flight service for ALL applicable NOTAMS immediately prior to flight.

Local residents are still chuckling over the couple that had several **NO FEDEX AT HANSCOM** signs scattered over their lawn. When asked why they were so adamantly against FEDEX coming to Hanscom, they replied, “Because we both work for UPS”.

On Monday, February 4th, **DJ Moore**, a junior at Hopkinton High School, shadowed **Keith Leonhardt**, Hanscom Operations Shift Manager. DJ is an aspiring pilot, who trains with East Coast Aero Club. The job-shadowing program at Hopkinton High School gives students an opportunity to see the day-to-day operations in their field of interest. Throughout the day, DJ participated in airport inspections and contractor meetings, but the highlight of the day came about during an emergency when a transient aircraft had a brake malfunction after landing on Rwy 29. DJ got a first hand look at the Hanscom emergency response system.

The **Aero Club of New England**, the oldest aero club in the U. S. A., (ACONE) has announced that **Paul Diette** has been appointed as an Advisor to the Board of Directors and will be Chairman of The Crash Course Committee. The Crash Course has always been one of the milestones in aviation safety and attracts hundreds of pilots from around New England.

ACONE had their exciting **CRASH COURSE SEMINAR** March 10 at the Renaissance Hotel in Bedford, MA. Title this year was **LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES OF OTHERS**. **Bruce Landsberg**, AOPA Safety Foundation delivered an interactive presentation on maneuvering flight. Always one of the more exciting events in New England, it was attended by hundreds. Also keep your eyes open for the **State Awards** and **Cabot Awards**, which will soon be announced. Anybody who is anybody will be attending,

There's a new book you might want to look into, especially if you've dreamed about ferrying your “bird” to other climates. It's writ-

ten by a local pilot, **Anthony Vallone** and entitled, *Air Vagabonds*, published by Smithsonian Books.

Called "the "Indiana Joneses" of the Sky", it's a quest for adventure that tells the story of the exciting and often dangerous life of a long-range solo pilot. Told by former ferry pilot, Anthony Vallone, *Air Vagabonds* recounts dozens of anecdotes from the men and women who ferried light aircraft around the globe during the 1970's and 80's, who flew from one misadventure to the next, battling storms, desert winds, aircraft malfunctions, primitive navigational aids, and dangerous third-world politics.

It's a romantic story since many of the pilots lived a swashbuckling life, carrying on international scams and numerous love affairs. Some were lost at sea; some were imprisoned by African despots, but most returned again and again to press their luck with "The Trim God", the ferry pilot's god of destiny.

Author Anthony Vallone served as an international ferry pilot from 1974 to 1995. Originally from New England, Anthony at one time owned the flying service on Falmouth Airport.

Joe Dini and **Ford vonWeise** are still in the Aviation Finance business, but they've recently changed hats. They're now connected with **Merrill Lynch Corporate**. Expect more news shortly from these two sharp businessmen.

Don't miss the big Open House at the **MIT Museum** Saturday, April 25th, located at 265 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA. from 12 noon-5pm. If you or any of your friends have an interest in aviation, it'll behoove you to attend. For more information, contact: **Beryl Rosenthal**, Ph.D., Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs, Tel: 617-452-2111, Fax: 617-253-8994, berylr@mit.edu

The **Federal Aviation Administration**, New England Region Runway Safety Program Office, is conducting **Surface Safety Days** at airports in the region. On May 22nd and 23rd, 2004, **Aviation Safety Counselors (ASCs)** will be situated at general aviation, public use airports, near ramp areas where aircraft park, greeting pilots and handing out safety information to promote surface safety. They'll share and educate people flying on those days about surface safety concerns, proper communication procedures and ways to develop and maintain situational awareness in a "pilot to pilot" environment.

Reminder: The annual **Aviation Safety Counselor's Banquet** will be held **May 12th** at the Renaissance Hotel in Bedford, MA. Last year over 220 people attended and it's expected even more will attend this year. In addition to the delicious Italian buffet, there'll be door prizes and a money raffle. Music will be supplied for dancing or listener requests until 10:00 pm. Doors open at 6:00 pm with the bar open from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm and dinner served at 7pm. More details will be forthcoming prior to the event.

If you saw smiles on the faces of pilots hangared at **Pine Hill** in February, you can thank the hard work of two men, **Vernon LeBeau** and **John Gordon** working for Massport. As you remember, the entire area had frozen over because of the drastic low temperatures that prevailed during that month and whenever the sun hit the ice on the rooftops, it melted causing the water to drip down and form an ice dam outside the hangar doors. And if that weren't enough, when the ice dams melted, the water began flowing onto the hangar floors where it again froze. Needless to say, it seemed like a never-ending "Catch 22" situation. Finally, Vernon and John went full force in the area, opened all hangar doors and with ice chippers and a backhoe, worked tenaciously to clear the area. When they finished the project, not only was the area fairly clean from ice, but also tower personnel thought they saw strobes in the Pine Hill area because of all the wide smiles on pilot's faces.

Some exciting things are happening at Hanscom.

Columbia Aircraft Sales, a subtenant in Signature's West Ramp

hangar, has been appointed the factory authorized dealer for Adam Aircraft products in the northeastern United States. This territory includes Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. As part of the relationship, Columbia Air Services, Inc. will be the Factory Authorized Service Center for the corresponding territory.

Columbia Air Services' is well known for its' experience in maintaining complex turbine and piston powered aircraft for over twenty-five years in the general aviation field.

QUESTIONS FROM CUSTOMS INSPECTOR KEN McCAFFREY

QUESTION 1:

Name the only pitcher to be credited with an all-star game victory while representing two different teams – Roger Clemens, Randy Johnson, Vida Blue or Jim Benning?

QUESTION 2:

What pitcher holds the record for most all star game victories with three wins – Tom Seaver, Lefty Gomez, Robin Roberts or Don Drysdale?

Answers below.

NOTICE TO PILOTS AND AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL

If you see anyone acting suspiciously on or near Hanscom property, please call Massport authorities at 617 212 6592 or State Police at 781 869 8095. When arriving at night and you need an escort, call 617-212-6593 or 617-212-6592.



Don Drysdale
Question 2:

1981-San Francisco Giants, National League
Vida Blue. 1971-Oakland Athletics, American League
Question 1:

Answers to Ken's Questions:

Continued on next page, column 1

The Freedom of Flight – Hanscom Style

